

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF	:	Administrative Action
	:	
	:	
	:	
KAREN THOMAS, LPN	:	FINAL ORDER
License # 26NP05029600	:	OF DISCIPLINE
	:	
	:	
TO PRACTICE NURSING IN THE	:	
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing ("Board") upon receipt of information which the Board has reviewed and upon which the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are made:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Karen Thomas ("Respondent") is a Licensed Practical Nurse in the State of New Jersey and has been a licensee at all times relevant hereto.

2. Upon notice from her place of nursing employment of Respondent's termination, the Board sent a letter of inquiry requesting certain information and documents regarding the termination, Respondent's nursing practice, and education, to Respondent's address of record in Somerset, New Jersey, via

regular and certified mail on or about April 9, 2014. The regular mailing was not returned; the certified mailing was returned as "unclaimed." Respondent failed to reply.

3. On May 20, 2014, the Board sent a second letter of inquiry to Respondent's address in Somerset, New Jersey. The regular mailing was not returned; the certified mailing was unclaimed and returned.

4. To date, Respondent has not responded to the Board's requests for information.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Respondent's failure to respond to the Board's requests for information constitutes a failure to cooperate with a Board investigation, in contravention of N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1.2 and 1.3, which the Board deems professional misconduct pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and also subjects Respondent to disciplinary action pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h).

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, a Provisional Order of Discipline was entered on January 21, 2015, provisionally suspending respondent's nursing license and imposing a \$500 civil penalty. A copy of the Order was served upon respondent by certified and regular mail at her address of record. The Provisional Order was subject to finalization by the Board at 5:00 p.m. on the 30<sup>th</sup> business day following entry

unless respondent requested a modification or dismissal of the stated Findings of Fact or Conclusions of Law by submitting a written request for modification or dismissal setting forth in writing any and all reasons why said findings and conclusions should be modified or dismissed and submitting any and all documents or other written evidence supporting respondent's request for consideration and reasons therefor.

Respondent replied to the Provisional Order with a submission dated February 16, 2015, and an additional submission dated March 6, 2015, and has provided the information originally requested by the Board. Therefore, the Board determined that suspension was no longer applicable. However, the Board determined that the \$500 monetary penalty was warranted, because respondent's failure to respond to two letters of inquiry made it necessary for the Board to issue an order so as to obtain a response, thus impeding the Board in performing its functions.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015,

ORDERED that:


1. Respondent is assessed a civil penalty in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500), for failure to cooperate with a Board investigation. Payment shall be made by money order, bank cashier check or certified check, made payable to the State of New Jersey or by wire transfer, direct deposit or credit card

payment delivered or mailed to George Hebert, Executive Director, State Board of Nursing, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Any other form of payment will be rejected and will be returned to the party making payment. Payment shall be due no later than fifteen (15) days after the filing of this order. In the event respondent fails to make a timely payment, a certificate of debt shall be filed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 and the Board may bring such other proceedings as authorized by law.

2. The Board reserves the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings based upon any information that Respondent ultimately provides in response to the letters of inquiry or upon any new information the Board receives.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

By:

  
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Patricia Murphy, PhD, APN  
President